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Shane Davies
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Ref: H201907508

Dear Mr Davies

Response to your request for official information

I refer to your request of 22 August 2019 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for:

> *"Who is responsible for researching investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G*
> *Information requested:*
> *5G technology presents new issues which depart from 4G Technology, here two higher microwave frequencies from 2.6 GHz to 28 GHz, compared to 700-2500 MHz typically used by 4G. Because the higher millimeter wave used in 5G does not easily penetrate objects, this requires the installation of antennas every few hundred meters.*
> *1: Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G on the New Zealand public.*
> *2: Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G on New Zealand's wildlife.*
> *3: Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G on New Zealand's environment.*
> *4: Can you please send me copies of all research and investigating that has been done specifically on 5G health effects and possible health effects on the New Zealand public its wildlife and environment.*
> *5: Who is the person responsible in New Zealand for making the final decision on whether it is safe to allow the rollout of 5G.*
> *6: Has the person responsible for making the final decision to allow the rollout of 5G in New Zealand done there due diligence required of them by law specifically but not limited to their Duty of Care to the New Zealand public its wildlife and environment.*
> *7: Is the Ministry of Health concerned about any possibility of unintended biological consequences and if yes what are they."*

I will reply to your questions in turn.

1. Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G on the New Zealand public

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is the Government's principal advisor on health and has functions (under the Health Act 1956) to improve, promote and protect public health. The Ministry convenes an expert advisory committee, known as the Interagency Committee on the Health Effects of Non-Ionising Fields, to review new research. The Committee meets every six months, and should there be reasonable suspicion of health hazards, or other significant issues, it is required to bring such information to the attention of the Director-General of Health and Minister of Health. The Committee will continue to monitor new research as it becomes available.

Further information about the Committee can be found here: https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/environmental-health/non-ionising-radiation/research-non-ionising-radiation

In addition, the Ministry participates in a World Health Organization project to assess the health effects of electromagnetic fields. Information about the World Health Organization project can be found here: https://www.who.int/peh-emf/en/

2. Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects and possible health effects of 5G on New Zealand's wildlife

The Ministry of Health does not have a role in researching and investigating effects on wildlife. The Ministry for the Environment provides evidence-based policy advice to the Government and guidance to local government on environmental issues. The Department of Conservation is the government agency charged with conserving New Zealand's natural and historic heritage.

3. Who is the person within New Zealand in charge of and responsible for researching and investigating the health effects

As advised above, the Ministry for the Environment provides evidence-based policy advice to the Government and guidance to local government on environmental issues.

4. Can you please send me copies of all research and investigating that has been done specifically on 5G health effects and possible health effects on the New Zealand public its wildlife and environment

Information about 5G can be found on the Ministry's website at: https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/environmental-health/radiation-environment/cellsites

https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/environmental-health/non-ionising-radiation

This information is regularly updated. As explained above, the Ministry of Health does not have a role in researching and investigating effects on wildlife or the environment.

5. Who is the person responsible in New Zealand for making the final decision on whether it is safe to allow the rollout of 5G

The Ministry of Health is the Government's principal advisor on health and has functions to improve, promote and protect public health. The Ministry has provided advice on its website about 5G, noting that it is covered by existing exposure standards. The Ministry recommends the use of exposure limits as outlined in New Zealand Standard: *NZS 2772.1:1999 Radiofrequency fields – Maximum exposure levels – 3 kHz to 300 GHz*. More information about this can be found on the Ministry website here: https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/environmental-health/non-ionising-radiation/radiofrequency-field-exposure-standard

This Standard sets limits on exposures to radiofrequency radiation produced by all types of radio transmitters (including 5G transmitters), for both the workplace and the general public. These limits are consistent with international guidelines.

6. Has the person responsible for making the final decision to allow the rollout of 5G in New Zealand done there due diligence required of them by law specifically but not limited to their Duty of Care to the New Zealand public its wildlife and environment

I am advised by the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment that 5G is not fundamentally different from other versions of cellular technology. Therefore, the use of 5G is covered under existing regulatory provisions. All electronic products, including 5G equipment, is required to comply with existing equipment standards, which ensure the equipment emits only safe levels of electromagnetic radiation. More information about this can be found at:

https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/5g-track-2020-35-ghz-spectrum-first-available

https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/4610-allocation-of-radio-spectrum-for-5g-mobile

https://www.rsm.govt.nz/business-individuals/buying-electrical-and-electronic-products-in-new-zealand/

7. Is the Ministry of Health concerned about any possibility of unintended biological consequences and if yes what are they.

The Ministry has recently developed a factsheet, "5G and Health", which provides information for New Zealanders about the technology that will be used by 5G and answers concerns about health effects. You can find this factsheet at: https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/environmental-health/radiation-environment/cellsites

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Woodley
Deputy Director-General
Population Health and Prevention